

Nutrition During Breastfeeding

Congratulations on your decision to breastfeed!!! A balanced and healthy diet is always important throughout your life. However, when you breastfeed, your body will change to make you feel hungrier and more thirsty. While breastfeeding you need to eat about an extra 500 calories each day. You can get these extra calories by choosing more nutrient rich foods from My Pyramid. Choose from the 6 food groups. Follow these guidelines for a healthy, balanced diet while you are breastfeeding.

Grains 6 to 10 oz. daily (half from whole grains)	Oils 6 to 8 teaspoons daily
Vegetables 2½ to 3½ cups daily	Milk 3—4 cups daily
Fruits 2 to 2½ cups daily	Meat and Beans 5 to 7 ounces daily



Even if you do not eat this way everyday, your breastmilk will have all the nutrients your baby needs.

Caffeine

Caffeine does pass into breastmilk. However, 1 to 2 cups a day probably won't bother your baby. Caffeine is found in tea, coffee, chocolate, colas (including some that are light in color).

Weight Loss

While you are nursing stay away from restrictive weight loss plans. Cutting your calories too much may reduce your milk supply and affect your health. However a gradual weight loss of 2 to 4 pounds each month is healthy and should not affect your milk supply.

Vegetarians

A vegetarian mother who eats dairy products and/or eggs can get enough nutrients. Vegans may need to be more aware of zinc, vitamin B₁₂, calcium, vitamin D, iron and minerals.

Foods to Limit

Many convenience food items are high in fat, sugar and calories and do not provide important nutrients such as protein, vitamins and minerals. These foods include fried foods, high fat chips, butter, margarine, oil, salad dressing, carbonated beverages, juice drinks, candy, cake, pie, cookies and other high calorie desserts.

Substance Use

Alcohol also fits in the category of foods to avoid. A safe level of alcohol consumption while breastfeeding has not been determined. Limit alcohol to only an occasional drink while you are breastfeeding. If you do drink, do this after breastfeeding or wait at least 1 hour for each drink you have.

Nutrition During Breastfeeding—Foods to Enjoy

Fluids

To ensure a good breastmilk supply drink enough fluids to satisfy your thirst and prevent dehydration. You need at least 8 to 12 cups of fluids daily - more if you feel thirsty. Sip on a glass of water, milk or juice while you are nursing your baby. Milk and juice also supply some of the extra nutrients needed for breastfeeding.

Limit the amount of caffeine beverages such as colas, teas and coffees to 2 servings or less each day. Too much caffeine may cause your baby to become active and lose sleep.



Grains

You need to eat 6 to 10 ounces daily of grains (at least half of these should be whole grain). These foods supply: B-vitamins, iron and energy! A one ounce serving is:

- 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal
- 1 slice bread or roll
- ½ cup cooked cereal (oatmeal)
- ½ cup cooked rice
- ½ cup cooked pasta
- ½ hot dog or hamburger bun



Fruits and Vegetables

Include fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet as much as possible. About 2½ to 3½ cups of vegetables and 2 to 2½ cups of fruits daily are important for breastfeeding women. Make sure to include a vitamin C source in your daily menu and a good source of vitamin A in your menus several times each week.

Good sources of vitamin C are:

- oranges
- orange, grapefruit or WIC approved juice
- strawberries
- green pepper
- broccoli



Good sources of vitamin A are:

- broccoli
- Butternut squash
- greens
- carrots and sweet potatoes
- cantaloupe



Eating fruits and vegetables each day is important for good health!

Meats and Beans

Eating 5 to 7 ounces each day of foods high in protein is important. A one ounce serving is:

- 1 ounce lean beef, pork, chicken, turkey or fish
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- ¼ cup cooked dry beans, dry peas or lentils
- 1 tablespoon nuts or seeds

Milk

Dairy foods provide calcium for women of all ages. Try to consume 3 to 4 calcium rich foods daily. The following servings provide 300 mg.:

- 8 ounces yogurt
- 1½ ounces natural cheese
- 2 ounces processed cheese
- 8 ounces milk

Choose lowfat dairy products for optimal health!



Remember to continue to take your prenatal vitamin!

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DEPARTMENT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
275 EAST MAIN STREET, HS2W-D
FRANKFORT, KY 40621-0001
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Other Calcium Sources

- ¼ cup whole almonds (164 mg.)
- ½ cup turnip greens (74 mg.)
- ½ cup calcium fortified fruit juice (300 mg.)
- 1—3 ounces canned fish with edible bones (salmon, sardines) (91 to 212 mg.)



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